

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EUR/CAN:LFJANOWSKI:RM

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMCONSUL VANCOUVER IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 279055

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SENV, CA, US

SUBJECT: FLATHEAD/CABIN CREEK PROJECT

REF: JANOWSKI/BENSKY TELECON

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF DEPARTMENT'S NOTE OF OCTOBER 20:

"THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE REFERS TO THE EMBASSY OF CANADA'S NOTES OF NOVEMBER 18, 1974, AND FEBRUARY 28, 1975, AND THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE'S NOTE OF OCTOBER 22, 1974, WITH RESPECT TO THE POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT OF COAL DEPOSITS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA IN THE HEADWATERS OF THE NORTH FORK OF THE FLATHEAD RIVER BY RIO ALGOM MINES LTD. THE USG WEL-COMES THE ASSURANCES OF THE GOC THAT CANADIAN AUTHORITIES WILL ENSURE THAT ANY DEVELOPMENT OF THESE DEPOSITS WILL BE SO DESIGNED AND OPERATED AS TO MEET CANADA'S OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE BOUNDARY WATERS TREATY. THE USG LIKEWISE APPRECIATES THE ASSURANCES OF THE GOC THAT THE USG WILL BE UNCLASSIFIED
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KEPT FULLY INFORMED OF PROJECT DEVELOPMENTS AND THE WILLINGNESS OF THE GOC TO HOLD CONSULTATIONS TO DISCUSS

THIS MATTER WITH THE AIM OF ENSURING THAT AMERICAN INTERESTS
ARE PROTECTED.

"THE USG IS OF THE VIEW THAT THE RIO ALGOM MINES PROJECT
COULD SERIOUSLY DAMAGE EFFORTS TO PRESERVE THE UNIQUE
ENVIRONMENTAL VALUE OF GLACIER NATIONAL PARK, THE FLAT-
HEAD NATIONAL FOREST, AND THE FLATHEAD RIVER BASIN AND
COULD CAUSE INJURY TO BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROPERTY IN
THESE AREAS. IN THIS CONNECTION, THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WOULD LIKE TO RECALL THAT GLACIER NATIONAL PARK WAS AMONG
THE FIRST BIOSPHERE RESERVES DESIGNATED BY THE US UNDER
UNESCO'S MAN AND THE BIOSPHERE PROGRAM.

"THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE THEREFORE SUGGESTS THAT CONS-
ULTATIONS BE HELD WITH RESPECT TO THIS MATTER AT THE
EARLIEST PRACTICABLE DATE. THE DEPARTMENT BELIEVES THAT
SUCH CONSULTATIONS SHOULD INCLUDE DISCUSSION OF THE STATUS
OF THE PRESENT EXPLORATORY OPERATIONS OF RIO ALGOM MINES
LTD., THE MINING REGULATIONS ESTABLISHED BY THE BRITISH
COLUMBIA POLLUTION CONTROL BRANCH, AND ANY PRELIMINARY
INFORMATION WHICH MAY BE AVAILABLE AS TO WHAT STEPS ARE
ENVISAGED BY THE GOC AND/OR THE GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH
COLUMBIA TO ASSURE ATTAINMENT OF THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF
POLLUTION CONTROL.

"THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE ALSO BELIEVES THAT AN APPROPRIATE
SUBJECT FOR CONSULTATION SHOULD BE THE UTILITY OF A
BILATERAL AGREEMENT OR OTHER ARRANGEMENTS TO HELP ASSURE
THAT THE WATERTON-GLACIER INTERNATIONAL PEACE PARK AND
ITS IMMEDIATE ENVIRONMENT CAN BE PRESERVED FOR THE BENEFIT
AND ENJOYMENT OF PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS. THE
DEPARTMENT ENVISAGES AN AGREEMENT OR OTHER ARRANGEMENTS
WHICH WOULD HELP ASSURE THAT BOTH THE WATER AND AIR
QUALITY IN THIS AREA BE PRESERVED WITHIN DEFINABLE PARA-
METERS FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE SCENIC, RECREATIONAL,
FISH AND WILDLIFE, AND OTHER NOTABLE ATTRIBUTES OF THE
REGION. IN THIS RESPECT, THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE WOULD
PROPOSE AN EARLY EXCHANGE OF NOTES BETWEEN THE TWO
GOVERNMENTS TO SIGNAL PUBLICLY THAT BOTH COUNTRIES ARE
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COMMITTED TO WORKING COOPERATIVELY TO DEVELOP MEANS OF
ENSURING MAXIMUM PROTECTION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE
AREA AFFECTED.

"THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE ALSO WISHES TO MAKE KNOWN TO THE
GOC THAT THE STATE OF MONTANA HAS REQUESTED THE DEPART-
MENT OF STATE TO PARTICIPATE IN PUBLIC HEARINGS THIS
DECEMBER IN ORDER TO ASCERTAIN THE VIEWS OF INTERESTED
PARTIES WITH RESPECT TO THE IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED PRO-
JECT AND MEANS OF ASSURING PRESERVATION OF THE UNIQUE

VALUES OF THESE AREAS.

"IN VIEW OF THE POSSIBLE INTEREST OF OFFICIALS OF THE GOC

AND THE GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, THE STATE OF
MONTANA WISHES TO EXTEND TO THE GOC AND THE GOVERNMENT
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA AN INVITATION TO OBSERVE THESE
PUBLIC HEARINGS."

2. WE ARE SOMEWHAT SURPRISED THAT BRITISH COLUMBIA
OFFICIALS UNAWARE OF TEXT OF OUR NOTE, PARTICULARLY IN
VIEW OF THE FACT THAT WE EXPECT REPLY FROM GOC THIS
WEEK. KISSINGER

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